[6th August 1955

Panchayat Court elections.

* 1988 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments and Transport be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether there is any property qualification fixed for candidates contesting Panchayat Court elections; and

(*b*) if so, when it was fixed and the reasons for its continuance?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) & (*b*) For panchayat courts set up under the Madras Village Courts Act, 1888, a rule issued in 1920 prescribes certain property qualifications which apply to all except Harijans. The object of prescribing this qualification at that time was to ensure that those who are to administer Law in a village through the panchayat court in an honorary capacity should be men of some status. A proposal to have this rule revised is under the consideration of Government.

Where, however, a panchayat is constituted under the Madras Village Panchayats Act, 1950, the panchayat will also function as a court, replacing the panchayat court set up under the earlier Act. No property qualification is prescribed for becoming a member of a panchayat under the new Act."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" The Hon. Minister in his reply has guarded himself by saying ' at that time '. Now, inasmuch as the highest posts in our State both at the Centre and in the State do not require any qualification, without considering the matter further, will the Government issue immediately instructions to cancel this out-moded rule? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Consideration does not mean consideration whether to have it or not to have it. Even the cancelling of it has to go through certain routine processes. That is being done."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Is it necessary for a person to possess any legal knowledge to be a member of this court, or is it given to anybody who has been elected by the people? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" No legal qualification is prescribed."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Questions are over."

[*Note.*—**An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.**]

II.—STATEMENT UNDER RULE 40 *RE* THE PENALTY RATES COLLECTED FROM THE RYOTS IN THE LOWER BHAVANI AREA OF ERODE, GOPI AND DHARAPURAM TALUKS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT.

MR. SPEAKER :—" Notices of motions under rule 40 have been received from two hon. Members, namely, Sri N. K. Palanisami and Sri K. T. Raju regarding the penalty rates collected from the ryots in the Lower Bhavani area. I must tell the House that